



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Council members commend the passage of the Farm Bill reauthorization

WINDOW ROCK – Navajo Nation Council members commended the recent passage of the Farm Bill reauthorization totaling \$867 billion, which will set federal nutrition, agriculture, forestry, and nutrition policy for the next five years if signed into law. The measure also includes several important provisions specific to agriculture in Indian Country. The Senate passed the bill on Tuesday, followed by the House on Wednesday.

“The Farm Bill reauthorization is very important for the Navajo Nation considering the amount of existing agriculture and the potential to expand in those areas, which includes Navajo Agricultural Products Industry,” stated Speaker LoRenzo Bates.

Speaker Bates said one of the key provisions favorable to tribes is the permanent establishment of a tribal advisory committee within the USDA tasked with providing technical assistance and input on all policies implemented by the USDA.

“Having a say at the federal level in regards to policies that fall under the USDA’s authority is very important for the Navajo Nation, especially when we are pursuing agriculture projects that were funded through Council appropriations,” Speaker Bates added.

He also said that it is important that the Navajo Nation advocate for the continuation of the drought insurance program under the Farm Bill. A few years ago the Navajo Nation Council invested in drought insurance provided through the USDA, which has proven to be very successful and beneficial for the Navajo Nation since its inception.

Speaker Bates said the bill also allows the Navajo Nation to leverage food sovereignty efforts and expand agricultural economic development by making significant investments in food and agriculture production, infrastructure, and economic development for tribes and tribal producers.

Other benefits of the Farm Bill include the continuation of tribal promise zones, access to funding for research opportunities for tribal colleges and universities, the requirement for the Government Accountability Office to study the agricultural credit needs of farms, ranches, and agricultural businesses to determine if the Farm Credit System need to be improved for tribes, and the authorization of tribal self-determination demonstration projects to the USDA.

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